

# **The Recipes of Mary Marino**



**A Life Philosophy Thru Food**

**by Charlie Marino**



# THE RECIPES OF MARY MARINO

## A Philosophical Biography In Recipe Form

The recipes below were written way back when in the 20th century in her own hand. They were passed along in person to her loving daughter Annette, and are presented here for the continuance of something much loved by her husband and children. Kept mostly loose on paper scraps or in a little blue notebook.

She never learned or wanted to make chicken Cordon Bleu or a soufflé, but fed us with solid, nutritional food. It not only gave her a lifespan of over 90 years (so much for not eating red meat or peanut butter or salt & butter items) but every single meal was tasty. We likely salted everything too much in the early years but found that without salt at the table, the meals were even more tasty in a world where you often cannot even tell what it is you are eating, and don't get me going about all the chemicals and preservatives we avoided thanks to her.

Her food was fresh and delicious, and her recipes stand the test of time.

MARY HELEN THERESA RYAN-MARINO was born to Irish German parents in Brooklyn NY, she and her siblings of the Whelan side were taken from them by the state due to a level of abuse which you can only imagine, considering the times. History continues to repeat as my own first wife was such a victim of her family.

Mary remained in a 'home' on Long Island NY until age 16, raised by nuns in residence there among other girls, with only occasional interaction with boys. Their news from the outside world came through sneakily reading the newspapers laid out on the floors when painters came to the large building. It was originally a farmhouse, donated to the state

via a church. There she learned to love and respect the plants and animals of nature.

At 16, she was placed with a family in Brooklyn where she learned how folks outside the nuns actually acted. She started working almost immediately as was the custom of the time for unmarried 'women'. When she left them a year or two later, the eldest son really loved her and wanted her to be his wife, but she loved him like a brother and that was that.

Named Marie Helen Teresa at birth, she chose Mary with whom to go through life. She met and married an American-born Sicilian, Charles, who was originally named after his grandfather Cirino but changed it to fit in better. She said yes after his third proposal, they both worked until the children came, lost her first stillborn but birthed 3 increasingly large children thereafter. They built a house together in Shenerock NY and sold it to fund the purchase of a home in Yonkers, which they bought unfinished and expanded into what is a 5-family home today.

Not only a fine cook, Mary made clothing from her own skirt patterns kept in the jacket of several of her books. They are plain but feminine; nice and easy to make. In addition to making housewife an honorable profession, she managed the family income, paid the bills & saved enough that we children never wanted as Dad brought home the checks. He took care of investing, stocks & bonds, and both did well fully trusting and believing in each other. Partners.

Enjoyed Tom Sawyer & Treasure Island. Big Stevenson & Twain fan.

Enjoyed cooking outside in the woods & camping out under the stars.

Enjoyed working with her hands. Sewing, knitting, cooking. Even though she was trained by nuns to be a subservient house servant to some man, whom *they* called a good wife, she never let that take away from the fact that she liked doing those things. A mind of her own was

a lesson for us all. It's easy to fight things you were raised with that you dislike, but harder for most folks to enjoy what you enjoy no matter who or what introduced you to it. The only exception was sex, which because of her abusive family she never really liked as more than a duty. Given everything, her husband found her to be an amazing human being.

Mom's cooking training began unlike a lot of modern women of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She was an orphan – taken away from her parents by NY State along with her brothers and sisters. They were slowly separated by time and distance, and the unpleasant memories they left behind. So being raised by catholic nuns in a farm-home on Long Island, not terribly far from her native Brooklyn, she emerged at 16 let loose by the State into the world. An America reeling from the Great Depression, placed with a family where she first experienced what passed for civilized home life.

A lovely, intelligent, and well-tempered young woman, she had potential suitors including a son in the adopting family, but waited until she found a job and had some experience in life before agreeing to marry a young Italian-Sicilian boy. Her education in Italian cooking began there. Grandma Felicia spoke broken English, was uneducated except in home arts, and never could relate a measurement! She cooked by looking and weighing in her hand and smelling. This is how she taught Mary, who watched like a hawk and remembered measurements.

If you find her handwriting difficult, you can Google each item on the web and decipher it easier that way. Her personal spin is the essential. Some of her notes and related photos made this file too large for upload so I truncated a lot. Lines after each recipe are to write your own notes or variations. It's what she did to her Betty Crocker & James Beard in the margins and with lots of underlining! She attached all the notes you see below to the appropriate BettyC pages with paperclips.

By the way, you may find a few of her ways of cooking now standard in modern cookbooks, so well were they received. Like her daughter's published crochet patterns for blankets and quilts. They pass on skills to those with ears to hear and eyes to see. Enjoy. Mangia!

## CONTENT

### Appetizers

Artichoke Dip & Mushroom Puffs appetizers wet the appetite  
Shrimp Cocktail Sauce at holidays makes eating with your fingers respectable  
Shrimp Spread try a different spin on a favorite  
Cheese Asparagus making something you must put up with palatable  
Dill Dips if not your thing, do it for someone else  
Citrus Glaze & Zucchini Bites & Artichoke Stuffed Tomatoes  
something nice on the outside can mask the inner truth

Roquefort Dressing Posh as credit cards: “I have one. I just don’t care about it. Maybe I’m stupid. I can buy anything in a store I want (cash or personal check) without it.” Not so dumb with all the debt I see folks carrying today.

### Main Courses

Buffalo Stew & Carrot Soup the hard-working man & woman need respect  
Spaghetti & Meatballs Speaking of gymnastics in schools to her own children and how they were so afraid of lawsuits that kids weren’t allowed on the monkey bars or old advanced equipment laying dormant, she quipped, “Everybody did the monkey bars and ‘rings’ when I was a kid. Yes, the rings, like in the Olympics. Nobody ever got hurt. Now it’s fear they are teaching. It’s just fear. Look at these kids again when they grow up.”

Lasagne life has layers of flavor  
Veal Scaloppini finesse and elegance do not have to be delicate  
Broiled Steak Dinner & Corn feed your omnivore body with a colorful plate  
Breaded Chops & Mashed Potatoes a little coating helps to keep things moist  
Liver Onions & Bacon Italians love their organs

Lentil Soup w/Franks iron and protein without much meat

Burgers & Fried Potatoes talking while eating shows you like your companions

Scrambled Eggs & Bacon one's waste is another's flavoring

Hungarian Toast simple and fun and starts the day

Pancakes when your first job today is chopping down a tree

Tuna Sandwich gotta give fish oil to children for their brains

Broiled Fish in Red Sauce a way adults will like fish who don't like fish

Hot Cereal Breakfasts a good bone source late at night for growing bodies

Versatile Chicken everything but the beak, and make soup with leftovers

Roast Lamb Feast top of the line

Broiled Ham Feast On her husband's stubbornness concerning seeking medical aid, "He would wait with a cold (influenza) until he was so bad he couldn't stand it. Then we would call a doctor. And the doctor came to the house in those days. It was very simple."

School Sandwiches not just for school

Thanksgiving Turkey Feast occasional excess is good

Meat Loaf cattle, buffalo, or lamb – moist and full of proteins

Mushroom Soup to warm the body

Shrimp Scampi sometimes fancy is ok, but not every day

Potato Dumplings warms the heart & soul

Red Cabbage a healthy plate is colorful

Eggplant Parmagian "Sometimes no matter how careful or how many times you do it, things just turn out different every time! Just go with it and make the best of it, like you planned it that way."

Beef Stroganoff "Classy can still stick to your ribs. That's real quality."

**Breads**

Garlic Bread two good things can make each other better

Carrot Walnut Bread we are omnivores

Pumpkin Bread from scratch is always more work, but satisfying

Perfect Whitebread keep trying; when hearing how the next generation treated marriage vows and had no respect for each other or themselves, “My goodness! What a way to live. They argue and leave!”

English Muffin Pizza surprise becomes a fun memory for those with a heart

**Desserts**

Pineapple Upside Down Cake When you find the best thing in the world, hang onto it.

Lemon Meringue Pie Don’t skimp when doing for others, else don’t bother in the first place!

Chiffon Cake life has to be both serious & frivolous

Cinnamon Buns variety is the spice of life

Chocolate Filled Almond Cookies use old favorites in new ways

Cream Cheese Foldovers using what someone else invented in your own way

Classic Almond Creme + Almond Macaroons respect for the classics in life

Sour Cream Cake not everything in life is sweet

Orange Cookies embrace the one thing that makes you smile

Graham Cheesecake do it yourself if you can

Old Fashioned Molasses Cookie can you even find molasses anymore?

Spirited Marble Cake have enough spirit to share with those you love

German Anise Cookies “Children don’t see us or what we say. They watch how we react to things when

things happen." Encourage your children to learn math with milk & cookie rewards.

Venetians reward after a Sunday dinner

Honey Bubbles holiday staples that no one eats, but ask for

Orange Cookies a surprise that looks like the same old thing

Apple + Apricot Turnovers some things in life are just delightful

Anise Toast bribe your children to read

Cream Puffs ah, the look on children's faces (& the mess is ok)

### **On Beverages**

Moderation was her watchword. Even a single glass of wine would make her feel tipsy, which she did not enjoy like

so many today who drug themselves away from reality.

## THE RECIPES

Artichoke Dip

8 oz. can artichokes drained  
& chopped.

12 oz. cream cheese softened +  
1/2 stick butter softened.

2 tbs. grating cheese, grated small  
crackers.

Heat oven 350°

1. In medium bowl, mix together  
artichokes, cream cheese & butter

2. Place in shallow baking pan  
3. Sprinkle grating cheese on top.

4. Bake for 20 mins. Serve on crackers.

Mushroom Puffs

3 tbs. butter

1 lb. mushrooms

1 small onion

24 oz. cream cheese soft

2 egg yolks

Artichoke Dip & 1b. Mushroom Puffs

The variety of things you can experience is only limited by your imagination. People fall into patterns and do the same old things all the time, things they have either come to like or are comfortable with. Even the exceptions become part of the pattern, but that's ok.

Fresh ingredients. Real butter. Real cream cheese. Fresh mushrooms. To each his own.

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### **Shrimp Cocktail Sauce**

For New Year's Eve, it was our family tradition to go to catholic midnight mass and have shrimp cocktail when we came home. As the youngest, staying up that late with adults was a treat in and of itself. Italians are long known to be fish eaters in addition to their renowned love of pasta dishes,

but for me, the shape and texture of shrimp make it superior to the usual fillets or fish cakes we had at other times. Although as an adult I gave up Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, and religious superstitions which seemed meaner means of controlling the weak and allaying fears, my taste for shrimp has never wavered especially in traditional cocktail sauces with fresh celery.

Cocktail sauce

1 cup catsup

1/4 cup chili sauce

juice of lemon

1/8 hot pepper sauce

1 tablespoon chopped parsley

1 tablespoon horseradish

1 teaspoon Worcestershire +  
makes  $\frac{1}{3}$  cups mustard.

Wed:- Mackerel - bread  
stuffing + dips

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### Shrimp Spread

Shrimp Spread ✓

Combine 2 cups minced cooked  
canned shrimp, 1 cup chopped cu-  
cumber, 3 teaspoons onion + 1 cup  
mayonnaise. Season to taste.

Roll - mozzarella cheese with Salumi

Dip

Mix -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cottage cheese - 3 oz.  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sour cream - 3 oz.  
 seeded - 1 cucumber finely grated  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  Teaspoon tarragon, mint, dill.  
 or  $\frac{1}{2}$  Teaspoon of any one of these  
 salt + pepper

or  
 Chopped parsley, chives, leaf thyme  
 basil, savory

This was something we didn't do a lot, mostly on the odd holiday or when we had 'company' over. Today people just buy dips for nachos and such, but mom took pride in making her own. And if she was going to make something herself, it was going to be special. Take pride in all you do.

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### Cheese Asparagus Bake

1 can asparagus  
 1/4 cup red pepper  
 1/3 cup mayonnaise  
 1/3 cup cheddar cheese  
 1/4 cup green onion  
 1 egg white beaten stiff

place asparagus & red  
 pepper in qt. dish  
 Combine mayonnaise with  
 cheese, onion; Fold in egg  
 white. Bake at 350°- 20 min.  
 ... - - - - - I. Wash.

### Cheese Asparagus



We never liked asparagus. It was the wrong texture or combination of textures. It didn't taste like one thing, but like we were eating a combination of roots, bark, and pulp. And the color was wrong – not a nice healthy string bean green, but more like dank rotting vegetable matter. Nevertheless, whenever it was on sale, which wasn't every week, she found a way to make it tasty or at least disguised without just boiling it and dumping on a ton of butter or grated cheese. Consistency in diet is essential for a long life, but having something good for you that might fill in a few nutritional gaps is also essential. She found lots of things in life unpalatable but suffered through it with grace and poise. She complained when there was a point to it when it was something to be fought against, but not for the sake of complaining. I think they call that class now, but I haven't seen it live in decades so it's hard to tell. Money, muscles, gold chains around the neck, or temporary undeserved fame for 124 characters seem to be the new definition.

This dish can be made to top a soufflé or quiche, but we didn't have those things often. Whatever works for you, even wrapping the asparagus like a hotdog pig in a blanket, is better than eating this nutritious but somewhat bitter vegetable alone. Reminds me of some family members I have had to endure. And the solution, temporarily, was quite the same. She found nothing wrong with a little distraction to swallow something vile.

**Dill Dips**Dill Dip

1 pint mayonnaise

1 pint sour cream

3 T. minced parsley

3 T. " onions

3 T. dill weed minced

1/2 t. salt

mix together &amp; refrigerate

make a couple of days ahead.

Serve with fresh vegetables.

makes 2 pints

**Dips**

were a Sunday thing. Always before dinner, and always a warning not to over stuff and lose your appetite for dinner. Later in life, I often bit off more than I could chew, or filled myself on poor substitutes for the real thing, never realizing it at the time. Only after the fact did I think of Mom's words. Bleeding yourself in bad company is another life hazard to avoid using food lessons from someone who loves you.

### Citrus Glaze & Zucchini Bites & Artichoke Stuffed Tomatoes

Appetizers and side dishes add spice and variety to the palate, especially if made with lots of healthy natural ingredients. She would laugh at the idiocy that passes for 'health food' today.

Citrus 'N' Spice Glaze  
 1 cup Heinz 57 Sauce  
 1 tablespoon Orange juice concentrate  
 last 10 min.

Malian Zucchini Bites -  
 1 tablespoon veg. oil

1/4 cup chopped Tomato  
1/4 cup chopped mushrooms  
1/4 cup chopped red or green bell pepper  
1/4 cup chopped ripe olives  
 2 tablespoons minced ripe olives  
 1 Tablespoon grated onion  
 1 Tablespoon chopped basil  
 1 teaspoon oregano  
1/4 Teaspoon pepper

Artichokes Stuffed Tomatoes

16 oz. jar artichokes  
1/4 cup chopped onion  
2 doz. cherry tomatoes  
chp. spinach leaves  
Parsley.

} mix

Shell tomatoes - stand 10 mins  
Fill with Artichoke stuffing - chill thoroughly.

### Roquefort Dressing

~~Feta cheese spread for vegetables~~  
Roquefort cream dressing  
mix 1 cup sour cream, 1 teaspoon  
lemon juice + 2 tablespoons X  
finely crumbled cheese —

Blue cheese spread  
1/3 lb. blue cheese X  
1-3 oz. package cream cheese  
1/4 cup Sauterne wine  
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
garlic salt + paprika  
1/2 teaspoon parsley  
Blend + Chill. makes  $1\frac{1}{3}$  cups.

I had almost forgotten how our father loved blue cheese. It looked horrible, and he took delight in saying how it was filled with insects, but mom laughed her tolerant laugh for stuff we said and did which she did not really find funny and was happy that we were happy. The stuff actually tasted great & sharp. Is there any better reason to smile? Too many are too fast to correct or discount and take delight in removing the small joys others find in life. Their joy is to crap on people. It is only the exceptional person like her who seeks to redeem us all. Too few.

**Buffalo Stew & Carrot Soup**Buffalo Stew

brown meat onion  
+ garlic, add bay  
leaves  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup wine  
1 cup mushrooms  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup catsup  
gravy master + flour.

Carrot soup

sauter Celery in butter;  
add cut carrots add 2 cups chicken broth  
1tble <sup>spoon</sup> thyme. cook until carrots are done.  
Put in blender + eat.



It may seem an odd combination, but the choice of an unusual meat should be tried with all your favorite staples, as well as a few odd things you don't particularly like with steak or chicken. While the key to longevity, irrespective of your native dietary constituents, has been proven to be consistency in the foods your body is forced to digest. Ever go to Mexico for the first time and eat the meat or vegetables? No better will you fare than drinking water there. An attempt should be made when young to try the unusual in search of something that reaches your particular genetic palate. Then make it a staple for the remaining decades of your life. Mom lasted until 93, my grandfather until 91 or two (records were bad in those days).

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## Spaghetti & Meatballs

As a main dish, it never occurred to mom to formally write down most of her main courses, it being such ‘common knowledge’. Yet the variety of these common and highly nutritious dishes is well understood.

Hers for spaghetti or macaroni (ziti, ravioli, rigatoni, or elbows) was always the same and so tasty that you didn’t want major variation. The keys were twofold (a) do not overcook the pasta to mushiness like so many Americans and (b) the sauce must have basil & bay leaf.

Cooking pasta is one of the first things we were taught as a child, knowing we could live on it if we had to when first on our own, and simply throw into the boiling pot when almost done a few fresh or frozen vegetables. Add butter and freshly grated cheese (parmesan or romano) or tomato sauce and cheese for a core every week meal. Don’t use so much water that the pasta disappears in it, and when you think it is done, pull a piece or a strand out to taste. If it doesn’t break a tooth, it’s ready. Or do as Grandma did and toss a strand of spaghetti against the wall – if it sticks, it’s done.

The sauce is simplicity itself and can always be augmented by frying up sausages or meatballs, or whatever leftover meat you have, then allowing them to simmer on low flame for hours, adding water as it evaporates. The sauce is a good paste, watered down to soup level then boiled to a slight thickness. Always a dash of basil and a bay leaf as her signature, plus season with garlic & onion powder or fresh tiny chunks of either or both. Yum.

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### **Lasagne**

Who doesn't love a good lasagna? Traditional red sauce with fresh tomatoes. Ricotta cheese in layers. Wavy pasta in layers. Parmesan and/or Romano cheese on top with slices of mozzarella throughout. And special lasagnas: meat sauce instead of plain red, chopped up sausages (we always used sweet). Our family favorite tomato sauce uses basil & bay leaf in addition to the usual Italian seasonings of fresh diced chunks of garlic and onions. Instead of chop meat or sausage, many make vegetarian versions with mixed vegetables plus beans of some type as meat protein substitutes, but we seldom did. Go meat! PS - no oregano please: that's for pizza!

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### Veal Scaloppini



I wish I had this in her own handwriting like the others, but she was taught it by my Sicilian grandmother, who never wrote anything down, taught by doing it in front of her, and never measured an ingredient in her life. Grandma was old country, and didn't even let my Irish mom in her home until she and my father were married a year! Mom was polite and persistent, though, and they grew to have mutual respect over the years. None of this 'oh, she's unfair, life is unfair, boo hoo, I deserve gimme', all too common today. Like my sister's selfish daughter.

Scaloppini chicken or veal – in the frying pan, with or without bread-crumbs, mix in Marsala or other desired wine and a little white flour to make its own gravy. Serve with spinach or escarole(garnished with garlic chunks) and baked potato (white = fill with sour cream & butter; sweet potato just the butter and maybe a marshmallow!)

For a side, Pillsbury crescent dinner rolls are fine loaded with butter and dipped in gravy, but you can also go with plain corn muffins for a tasty alternative to the usual breads.

I prefer red with this and most meats, but Mom was always fond of her white Chablis or Pinot Grigio (even though she hadn't tried the latter until after Dad had passed away).

To make the whole thing look more sophisticated for a special meal, substitute asparagus spears for the usual greens.

If you prefer cutlets to strips of meat, you can also smother the finished veal with mushrooms, cook after flipping the veal, and cooking in the brown gravy it makes itself (with a little flour for thickness and red Marsala wine).

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### Broiled Steak Dinner

The variety of side dishes plus the central feature of red mammal flesh, still red and dripping blood, made steak dinner then and to this day a staple for full-blooded, American men and women of energy and purpose. It is well known that leaf eaters have far lower energy levels, whereas those who regularly eat fruits and animal flesh (land or sea) have far higher energy levels. This includes brain activity.

But enough of the physics. Steak should be cooked over flame whenever possible, never boiled or microwaved (yuck), and not done so well as to be grey. If unsure when broiling in an indoor oven or on a grill, take a sharp knife and cut into the deepest part. If still purple, give it a bit more. You will get more amino acids and proteins by far if red, and the taste is hard to beat. Beware of cooking until it's just the way you like it since red meat (cattle and other mammals) will continue to cook for a minute or two after removal from heat!

For side dishes, potato is the central actor, with vegetables ranging from corn on the cob (boiled like potato or also broiled over flame wrapped in aluminum foil), green string beans (my goto veggie), red beets (loaded with vitamins), and salad. Include pretty much ANY vegetable you like. Try to have a green one with red meat since it aids in digestion and eliminates problems associated with a lifelong diet of red meat as I have. Remember, Mom and grandpa lived to their early 90s. Dad only died earlier because of smoking pipes.

I like my potato mashed and loaded with butter on the plate. Restaurants often offer sour cream as well, which goes great with gobs of butter, melting in the hot mash or full-size baked potato. An unlikely improvement came fairly recently with instant Idahoan brand instant potatoes. I know, and you're right: most instant anything is crap, both in taste and nutrients. But these guys finally got it right. Try the butter

& herbs or butter & garlic variety. Just add boiling water, stir to mash likeness, and enjoy. Almost as good as Moms. Science marches on!

For barbecue, those from the south and western United States feel it is all about the sauce and marinating. Mom always thought that was a French inspired trick because their meat sucks so badly (we were there – it does). Good meat does not require anything but a sharp knife. For my northern barbecue, I like to place meat over a fire of wood, still burning flames which just reach the meat. If you use charcoal briquettes, keep them close enough that when the juices start falling into the fire, flames will rise from the briquettes to lick the meat! And please let any lighter fluids burn off before placing the meat.

Note that you can do this with frozen steaks, but it's better if you let frozen meat thaw in the refrigerator for a day. It won't go bad until several days in the fridge and is actually more tender when just starting to darken from its bright red color. Cook that day!

And mom said never re-freeze! I have found it's like going back to an old boyfriend or girlfriend – tempting and sometimes convenient but seldom a good idea. Mom was right again.

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### Breaded Chops & Mashed Potatoes

Pork or lamb, a good chop seared around the bone is a taste of heaven.

It was always funny to me that meat, which I love, could be that much better when properly breaded before cooking. As a little kid, I remember asking Mom why not just have bread with the meal, which we often did. Even with breaded meats. She smiled in her gentle way as my father scowled, explaining to me how the bread held the juice of the meats in for a more tender and - when spicy breadcrumbs were used - tasty meat. Turning to my father's dismay that she once again explained things to me in a detailed manner the way you would tell an adult, she replied in that same smiling gentle way, "He's going to be a scientist. He'll learn."

I always remembered that and did the same with the kids in my own life. Tell them the adult truth in all things. They'll pick up what they will and know they can come to you for the truth. I know adults who feel otherwise, but then again I know adults who can't handle truths any better than a 5-year-old, only they will never grow out of it.

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### Liver Onions & Bacon

As a child, even bacon couldn't make liver appealing for me. All mom's entreaties that it was good for you, all protein and vitamins, all that, but nothing could convince me to embrace the wonders of liver. Many a night I was the last at the table since food was not cheap, especially meats, and I was not allowed to leave the dinner table until my plate was clean. Or at least mostly clean. There's a waste-not-want-not lesson in there somewhere, but when I grew to 6' 2", was lifting weights in college, and sleeping with the most beautiful young woman you can imagine, I silently thanked her for every bite she made my skinny younger self eat, like it or not. It wasn't cruelty. It wasn't just the cost of wasted food (we could have had it as leftovers). It was in my best interest. Thanks, Mom!

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### Lentil Soup w/ Franks

Here's another dinner I wasn't crazy about, but at least it wasn't liver; something that even onions or bacon couldn't help. Mom found the trick for bark-of-tree (= tasteless) lentil soup by cooking and popping in 1/2" sections of hotdogs. You could take a spoon of lentils, then one of lentils and a dog section, again and again until it was all gone. Another one of those meals super good for you by high protein this time not from animals but plants. I still keep lentils in the house (they make great nuclear fallout shelter rations since they last forever if kept dry). And there's still no way I eat them except with hotdogs.

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### Burgers & Fried Potatoes

Americas spend billions on burgers. Yet I have seldom had commercial burgers better than Moms. To give Dad more than a little credit, he was both the meatball maker and hamburger mixer. And cooker when we did it on the grill outside in summertime. Their burgers were similar to their meatballs, just squished flat. Many fast food burgers are just too skinny and not as juicy, although some restaurants do get it right. Many don't and just load it up with garnish to hide lesser quality meat or, well, less meat. Laying on our cheese of choice - Swiss - violates the ancient Judaic tradition of mixing milk & red meat products, but boy oh boy do they taste good together on a bun with a slice of tomato. I wasn't a pickle guy like some in my family, but always put on ketchup.

In my later years, Americans shied away from red meat like steaks or burgers, but our folks made the juiciest, most delicious red burgers anywhere. Accept no substitutes of political correctness.

For the record, no one in my family even considered using mayonnaise. That's just wrong!

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### Scrambled Eggs & Bacon

Any new spouse, male or female, can do it. A healthy, delicious break of the fast for those who keep themselves physically active. Not one to believe all the crap people say when fashionable about ‘healthy foods’, she lived into her 90s because she knew what really was healthy. And this breakfast is a great way to start the day. Not every day, but not less than weekly either.

Take a pair of bacon strips, not smoked or flavored or anything but good American bacon, and fry them in a little water until almost crisp in a frying pan. They make their own juice towards the end. Shove them to the perimeter and pour in a mixture of two eggs beat smooth with just a touch of milk (whole milk – not skim or low fat!). The bacon fat is your lubrication as you turn and turn the eggs until the clumps are just lightly browned on the outside. Serve with hot coffee, sweetened with white sugar, and add milk if you desire.

For bread, anything goes. Bagels and butter, Bagels and cream cheese. Sliced bread & butter. For a change, you can make one slice butter and one grape jam or jelly. Personally, I prefer to dunk my bread & butter in the coffee, but that’s just me. She did too, for now and then I would catch her when Dad wasn’t looking, for he would make light fun of her being a ‘dunker’.

The taste of eggs scrambled and fried in bacon grease cannot be described to anyone who hasn’t tried it. In modern times, when bacon has been shunned, young couples often shred a few slices of hard Italian salami into the egg batter and it works great before-during-after morning sex, mind the addition of a little cheese melted in while frying. It’s all good, but fresh bacon was always the best – not dried little bacon bits. And healthy if you don’t spend your days sitting on your ass, but then spending your life like that has health problems built in unless you

find time to move and work out each day, irrespective of the salt and fat on bacon. Enjoy.

Mom would smile when her daughter added chopped onions, or black pepper to the fry. To each his or her own.

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### Hungarian Toast

Joy on a Saturday morning. I still do it to this day. And I knew I found a good friend when after a night of carousing (drinking) with the boys or dancing (and drinking) all night with the girls, someone suggested french toast at a dinner and off we went, no sleep.

The odd thing was, when traveling in France and staying with a family there I thought to thank their hospitality by waking up early and making them all 'french toast'. Imagine my surprise when they (a) loved it and (b) asked me what the heck this was. I just made it plain, soaking their fresh-cut loaf in scrambled eggs with a little milk, fried in butter with a strip of bacon, and seasoned with cinnamon before smothering in actual maple syrup (very sweet). Far as I know, the Hungarians did it first though almost every European culture did it in some manner shape, or form.

I guess it's like the fries: it's not theirs, just a way to make something simple sound fancy. Mom always valued good simple over empty fancy. In people as in food.

## Pancakes

If it wasn't Hungarian toast on Saturday morning, pancakes ended up being one of my delights and one of the first cooking experiences I mastered. Nowadays I put raisins in it once poured into a hot pan with butter, but as a child, all the extras were added after cooking. A simple tasty way to eat your flour, and get egg protein (1 egg per 2-3 pancakes) as well. I'm not fond of the soft almost uncooked ones dinners often serve, having been raised on & still make them slightly crispy on the outside. Mostly we used Aunt Jemima, now Pearl, but mom added a dash of vanilla!

Maple syrup is, of course, standard but I was an adult before I realized Log Cabin was mostly corn syrup, and that when I tried true maple syrup I did not prefer it. Mom, being raised on a farm, actually preferred molasses, almost forgotten now in the super-sweet America I inherited. It was ok that we had different tastes without it becoming a cause of misery or a contest of wills. Humans do that so often I wonder that our species made it a single generation into the atomic age.

### Tuna Sandwiches

For kids like me who weren't crazy about fish, especially flavored with lemon as Mom did (everyone else loved it), tuna was one of the exceptions I went for. Even then, Mom made an effort to see I got what she and Dad always called 'brain food'. Yes, she made sure the bread was always soft and fresh (grate hard bread for breadcrumbs). Enough mayonnaise to hold it all together and dull the fish flavor I didn't like. Chopped up celery into tiny chunks that further diluted a flavor I preferred mild to full strength. After all, celery is mostly water in a fiber matrix.

To this day, I stay away from lettuce on my tuna sandwiches, as it tends to pull the whole concoction apart. I do add tomato by chopping up a slice into a dozen pieces. And have it or some fish once a week to be sure to get those nutrients not found in land animals or plants.

If you want a little more flavoring to soften the fish taste, try a dash of teriyaki sauce. 100 million Japanese can't be wrong.

She thought you could always find a way to make what you need into what you like. Or at least tolerate. Same with people. This was one gift I never mastered.

### **Broiled Fish in Red Sauce**

My father had a hand in this. He commented one day that at the high-end hotel (The Stanhope on 5th Avenue in Manhattan) in which he bartended, the kitchen one week had a very expensive fish meal. He was always curious what the wealthy and famous were paying ungodly prices for, so he commonly asked the chefs. It turned out this ever-so-special meal of the week was to him essentially a broiled fillet of flounder with red sauces poured over it, both sides after being flipped over. A little spice. A little useless parsley to add color, and a tiny set of flowers for more distraction. But essentially fish in tomato sauce!

He and Mom made it only a few times, and he claimed to really like it, along with my sister. I think they just liked fish and unfortunately for me always flavored the tomato sauce with lemon sauce and white wine that's what he claimed they did at the hotel. It was one of those meals I remember them laughing all the way through both making it and eating it. If you find things like that in your life, Mom would consider you wealthy.

## Hot Cereal Breakfasts

We grew up with farina, something awful called Wheatina, and oatmeal. Plus the usual combination of good cold cereals and sugar-laden cold cereals. You can kid yourself that the milk in cold cereal, or even a sliced-up piece of fruit makes up for all the sugar, but no. It doesn't. Cereals without embedded sugar are the way to go. Then when you dump in banana slices, a small can of mixed fruit, or sliced anything and use whole milk (no skim or low-fat fakery), you have a real breakfast.

Scientists have confirmed Mom's view that it's good for you, and a nice break from eggs every day. The hot cereals especially fill a fiber need in your digestive tract, so to this day I have oatmeal for breakfast one day a week. My favorite way with this hot, fast, so simple a kid can make his own breakfast, is to put a small handful of raisins in the bowl before pouring hot oatmeal on top of it. And if you like sweetness as much as me, use honey instead of processed sugar. Other fruits work, but when hot oatmeal softens the raisins and their natural sweetness comes out in each bite, I know my Mom loved me. To this day.

If you screw up and don't use enough water, it can get dryish and heavy to eat, so just add a little more water while still in the pot, or a little milk if already in the bowl. Mom always thought any excuse to give milk to children was a good one. My 5'9" sister 6'1" brother and I (6'2") can attest that good bones and posture need a good calcium foundation in childhood.

### Versatile Chicken

So many ways to cook it. And every recipe here works well with veal sliced thin or scaloppini strips.

A passel of legs, just broil in the oven, turning once, no basting. Juicier with breadcrumbs.

Split in half, guts side down, bake to start at 350 for 20min then broil to finish with a nice crunch to the skin (leave it on when cooking!). Can garnish in the oven halfway with chunks of any color potato, carrots, celery, and if my sister is around lots of onions.

Chicken or veal cutlets – sliced thick, breaded for sure with 4C or Progresso breadcrumbs. Serve with garlic mashed potatoes and string beans in olive oil. Garlic bread to match (long Italian – not French – bread split long-ways and loaded with butter, olive oil, and chopped/diced fresh garlic, as much as you can stand)

For a side, Pillsbury crescent dinner rolls are fine loaded with butter and dipped in gravy, but you can also go with plain Jiffy corn muffins for a tasty alternative to the usual breads just like scaloppini.

### **Roast Lamb Feast**

This may be my favorite feast meal. Even over lasagne. Even over Thanksgiving turkey or Xmas ham.

Leg of lamb isn't cheap and we didn't have it often, but when we did the flavor of medium-rare juicy lamb with whatever potatoes and string beans or spinach were with it, plus garlic bread (homemade of course with lots of melted butter) cannot be beaten. It was even great with asparagus, which was otherwise a chore. Melted cheese over the vegetables added a little extra to the feast, as well as making more than 1 kind of potato and Pillsbury crescent rolls for the bread, hot and put in your own butter to melt.

Getting everything to be ready at the same time was the hardest part, and a real challenge but worth it. Sometimes it was a 3-4 cook effort, but Mom made the circus work and Dad got to lord it over us as the head of the family. Sitting down when it was all ready, we feasted.

### Broiled Ham Feast

Pineapple!

To this day, I don't eat pineapple often, but with a broiled ham or pork loin, yummy. Thanks, Mom for once again presenting varied tastes to entertain our palettes while enriching our bodies and minds.

Some things do take time. Sometimes it's a technique to master, Other times mastering the intricacies of certain complex recipes. But in the case of pork, it's a matter of the finesse to cook it past trichinosis. A lot of old superstitions have long since lost their origins, but the Judaic prohibition against eating pork was clearly a matter of smartly avoiding food poisoning in the desert at a time when no modern refrigerators meant taking your life in your hands with pork or rabbit. I've hunted and made bear stew (yum) which has the same problem: you must cook it enough for safety but not dry it out!

Fresh ham is the uncured leg of pork. Allow 1 lb per person in uncooked weight. And if the skin is not removed, great - cook it to a nice crunchy crispy finish!

Mom seasoned with salt, black pepper, thyme, and rosemary. Sometimes oregano. Slice the sides in a diamond pattern (scoring) then run in the spices. Wait on the pineapple slices until it's almost cooked and baste it with pineapple juice whenever you like. Oven at 150 degrees C (325 F), 40 minutes per pound. You can roast white potatoes and onions along with the meat past the halfway point. Add vegetables 45 minutes before the meat is done and turn them over once or twice.

Apple sauce is also a fine side, and beer or a light rose makes the meal. Slice the meat as thin as you like, not like ham steaks.

Yeah, one of the more complex dishes. Ever so tasty when done right and worth the work. Like so many things she showed us.

## School Sandwiches

A staple of childhood to save money vs buying school food, we always left the house after a solid breakfast (not just cold cereal or toaster/microwave things) and had a lunch bag with a sandwich and a piece of fruit.

My favorite to this day, in my weekly rotation, is 4 slices hard salami on white or wheat with 2 of Swiss or Munster cheese and mustard. Tomato and lettuce do not hold up well in a kid's lunch bag, but at home as an adult, it adds tasty variety and with a side dill pickle is a solid meal. To break it up, substitute baloney (which is cheap hot dogs so use Hebrew National = no artificial chemicals) or ham (and match ham with mayonnaise instead of mustard).

Some will tell you that these 'cold cuts' or sandwiches of any type are not sufficiently nutritious, but they are wrong. Use good ingredients and the invention of the Earl of Sandwich (yes, the first man to put meat between sliced bread) will continue to be a portable meal of strength and flavor for students and workmen in the field for generations to come. Those who rail against sandwiches are usually the same idiots who suck down diet soda, energy drinks and put sugar or salt in excess into every meal or dessert. The same ones who use margarine instead of real butter.

Short story about Mom being right. In college, at a lab where I studied and worked, the other science geeks and I placed a dish with half a stick of butter and half of margarine side by side. We left it on a window sill with the window open. After the first hours, insect life was the first to visit. Later came the birds, fluttering about and pecking in their avian way. After less than a week, the experiment was over: the butter had completely disappeared. Completely. The half stick of margarine was not even scratched. At all. **Nothing recognized it as food.** Just think a

little common sense, like Mom always did. Maybe you too can live past 60 with your faculties intact.

### Thanksgiving Turkey Feast

Here's the other family feast in which I loved the turkey legs as much as the idea of a family feast. Knowing the whole country, if whatever means, were having or should try to have a feast to give thanks for all the stuff in their lives which was working. All the good stuff. We sat and ate and joked (Dad was a big one for telling jokes & stories, and Mom just smiled and gauged our reactions as was her way - always thinking and evaluating without criticism). We didn't spend a lot of time formally thinking of what we were thankful for beyond the meal, but I suppose there are those who did. We just had a good time.

This was one of those 2 potato meals, where I had both white mashed with butter and sweet potatoes, sometimes baked with honey or molasses or something sweet and sometimes with butter & marshmallows melted in. And a time for home-baked rolls of some type, not sweet though - those are for dessert or breakfasting on Sundays.

It was also one of those feasts where we had cream cheese-filled 3" celery stalks - yum - or some other kind of appetizer.

After a feast like this, there was always time for coffee and a dessert, often a homemade pie or cake, never the same twice in a row. Mom and my sister did a ton of baking, and even when it was less than what they called perfect, I could never be happier than eating their cooking. Appreciation you either have or you have an empty soul. They never asked for praise, but appreciated it when it came unbidden. And isn't that the best way to get it?

I became the turkey carver only after I left home, being the youngest there. Being a hunter, and used to various wild animal bodies a lot less meaty than a commercial turkey, I used a simple expedient of a long horizontal slice under each breast, then cutting down large slices one

after another to that horizontal cut, giving lovely white meat slices. But I always got the dark meat leg. leg.

Growing up my best friend and I would have leftovers at each of our houses - actually at both of our houses on the same day! The mothers never let on they knew, but they were cut from the same mold and each fed us until we nearly puked. Never did, but we certainly wallowed around a TV set for the rest of the day moaning happily!

### Meat Loaf

2 lbs chopped beef or lamb



1 stalk of celery, 2 garlic sections, chopped

spices:

flavored or plain bread crumbs

1 raw egg

Mix all ingredients in a bowl, kneading with your hands until everything is well mixed. Place in broiling pan into an oven set at 160 C (325 F). Bake for 90 minutes, basting in its own juices every 20 minutes or so. On the side of the meatloaf, quarters or eights of a white potato. Boil or nuke some string beans separately.

Use a canister of Pillsbury crescent rolls. Add to the oven in a separate tray at the designated time so everything finishes at once. Key: use chop meat with < 80% fat content to keep it juicy and flavorful, plus chock full of amino acids.

Mom always made this a juicy meal. When young, and lacking in culinary appreciation, she allowed Ketchup to be used for garnishing, though her flavorful choice didn't really need it. I do not recall her ever using lamb chopped meat, but having tried it with her simple yet effective recipe, I can attest to its portability to any land meat. With venison, add half-cooked bacon (chopped home-fried strips, not dry bits from the store) and with buffalo add carrots. You can glaze it with something beyond ketchup, but we never knew what else she used. Either way, yum.

### Mushroom Soup

Takes 15 minutes mushroom Soup

1 lb. Fresh mushrooms

1 can evaporated milk

Salt + pepper.

1 - Slice mushrooms

2 - Cover + boil 10 minutes

3 - Thicken to the consistency of  
pancake batter with flour.

4 - Thin with evaporated milk  
to desired thickness.

5 - Add salt + pepper.

Dad really went for mom's pale whitish mushroom soup. He never got enough of it and never got tired of the way she made it. At the hotel where he worked for many years as head barman, the Stanhope of Manhattan, they made theirs this way

Most restaurants don't rank above Mom's. Many are dark brown and tasty if usually a little too salty. Moms was thick, tasted great, and needed no salt to hide it. I especially liked dunking Italian bread in it!

to be ready. Shrimp Scampi  
15 mins.

24 - large shrimps

8 fresh garlic, cloves minced

1/2 lb. butter melted

2 c. sweet sherry wine

pepper to taste

1 - Prepare shrimp & clean

2 - Place shrimp saute shrimp  
on low to medium heat on stove  
tops.

Place butter in saute & melt.

Add minced garlic, shrimp &  
saute together on medium heat  
along with a sprigging of clove pepper  
When shrimp turn white & cooked add  
sherry wine slowly or not to catch fire.  
over

**Shrimp Scampi**

One of the fancier restaurant dishes loved by Italians is shrimp scampi. When Mom made it, she could lay it over a bed of pasta or rice with equal success. Occasionally she baked it in a Corningware deep dish. She liked Corning ceramics a lot and even gave me a set when I was first married. My new bride was young, sexy, and couldn't cook worth a damn, but her first success in the kitchen was making tuna casserole baked in one of those Corning dishes. Good memories.

In later years, I could not help but think of my mom's cooking whenever I saw a space shuttle launch from NASA, and those thousands of ceramic tiles protecting it. To thank her, Mom now has a nameplate in the sidewalk at a certain southern NASA facility.

### Potato Dumplings

reduce liquid to one half. Add paprika for color. Stir.

#### Potato dumplings

3 lbs. potatoes

3 eggs

1/2 c flour

4 T. cornstarch

nutmeg to taste - salt + pepper

Boil + mash potatoes

mix all ingredients, add more flour if it sticks.

Set aside.

Roll into balls. When ready to serve, drop balls in boiling water do not cover.

When they come to top they are done. Take out with slotted spoon. Pour sauce from beef gravy + serve.

on top!

Note: end of another recipe



*My Recipe Journey*

Yum. Mom's version was mutated into potato croquettes, which instead of smooth were roughly fried in a pan. To this day I love my mashed potatoes and steak. And fried with burgers. And when in fancy steak restaurants make sure to order the baked potato with sour cream and a ton of butter. So take it from me when I say my favorites were Mom's croquettes, which tells you just how great they were to me, folded gently in her hands, breaded on the outside with spices like parsley for color, garlic & onion flavoring, and fried in olive oil. How could you not feel loved when being this well-fed?

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**Red Cabbage**



A traditional Irish dish, you don't have to be Irish to enjoy it with any kind of meat. Just because you don't have it every day, doesn't mean you don't need the odd nutrients it contains. A well-rounded, colorful meal fits the bill.

Never be afraid to employ some odd food like this from your genetic heritage. It will delight your family, even if they don't go for it. Extreme taste or appearance – like squid or lamb eyeballs – can be fun.

### Eggplant Parmigiana



Use the recipe for Lasagna.

Instead of meat, use eggplant.

Delicious!

To prepare the eggplant, peel it, then slice into  $\frac{1}{2}$ " sections. The center is tastiest, so I save the ends for frying with scrambled eggs the next morning.

Dip the slices in flour seasoned with salt and pepper, as you like. Saute in a frying pan quickly until both sides lightly browned. It will cook the rest of the way inside the lasagna. Alternate pasta slices with eggplant & cheese layers, thick as you like. Under an inch is a sin so use a deep pan.

Onion, basil, and parmesan cheese are terrific flavorings. Be daring! The beauty of lasagna is the variety of ways you can use any other flavor or leftover vegetables in the fridge. Nothing went to waste with Mom. Her pure eggplant parm with lots of cheese and pasta layers is fabulous!

**Beef Stroganoff**



Beef Stroganoff – Sounds fancy, and looks it, but this creamy and comforting dish is simplicity itself. Strips of any beef or chicken or pork simmered in a savory mushroom, brandy, and any cream sauce, served over soft egg noodles or linguini. And you don't need the brandy!

Mom varied the favor by using whatever cream sauce she wanted to try out, and whatever meat was around. It looked and tasted great whatever she happened to do with it that day.

## BREADS

### Garlic Bread

One of the easiest and tastiest breads for the whole family, and you don't even have to bake the bread yourself. Mom used long loaves of Italian bread, fresh from the deli or bakeries on Arthur Avenue in the Bronx or along McClean Avenue in Yonkers, but you get the idea.

So simple she never wrote it down, and may even have varied it like Grandma Marino every time just for fun. Slice the long loaf lengthwise. Mix together  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mayonnaise (I like Hellmanns), a tbsp or two of chopped fresh parsley, 1 tsp fine minced garlic or more, and either romano or parmesan cheese (usually grated herself from a block).

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl except bread. Arrange bread on a baking sheet, then spread with Mayonnaise mixture. Broil until golden. Delicious with both meats and pastas.

A treat for the kids is to be allowed to do the grating! Mom believed in getting the kids to participate. Even now, decades later, the memories are as warm as her bread. For the parents, it also reveals something about who each child shall become. Observe!

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### Carrot Walnut Bread

We had this cake with coffee a number of times with no icing whatsoever. Some in the family wanted the sweetness increased. Mom knew better than to screw with the formula for the cake more than a touch, so icing became the method of choice. Wisdom.

#### Carrot Walnut Bread

Bake at 350° for 1 hour

Makes one 9x5x3 inch loaf

1 cup veg. oil

3/4 cup sugar

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 1/2 cups flour

1/2 teaspoons baking soda

1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 1/2 cups grated carrot (3 large)

1/3 cup ground walnuts

1- Grease a 9x5x3 inch loaf pan, dust with flour.

2- Combine veg. oil, sugar, eggs & vanilla.

3- Sift flour, baking soda, cinnamon & salt, add to sugar mixture, stir in carrots & nuts.

4- Turn into pan & bake 350° for 1 hour.



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**Pumpkin Bread**

Pumpkin Bread

Bake at 350° for 45 mins. use 2 pans.

3 cups sugar

1 cup veg. oil

1 2/3 cups (1 pound can) pumpkin

4 eggs beaten

3 1/2 cups flour

2 teaspoons baking soda

2 teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 teaspoon ground allspice

1/2 teaspoon ground cloves

2/3 cup sugar

1- Grease 2 9x5x3 in. loaf pans. dust with flour.

2- Combine sugar, oil, pumpkin + eggs; beat until fluffy.

3- Sift flour, soda, salt + baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice + cloves.

4- add to pumpkin mixture alternately with water. Turn to pans.

Bake 350° 45 mins.



Yet another delightful taste treat that is so full of flavor and moisture on its own, yet many toss on a bit of white icing too. Mom used to sit and eat an after-school snack with me, and her treat for herself was a dollop of whipped cream on top! I often tried it myself and decades later it still warms my heart more than most of the women I have boinked. Some things really matter. And *should* be valued above the ordinary.

## PERFECT WHITE BREAD

1 package active dry yeast  
 1/4 cup warm water  
 2 cups milk, scalded  
 2 tablespoons sugar  
 2 teaspoons salt  
 1 tablespoon shortening  
 5 3/4 to 6 1/4 cups sifted  
 all-purpose flour

OVEN 400°

Soften active dry yeast in warm water (110°). Combine hot milk, sugar, salt, and shortening. Cool to lukewarm.

Stir in 2 cups of the flour; beat well. Add the softened yeast; mix. Add enough of remaining flour to make a moderately stiff dough. Turn out on lightly floured surface; knead till smooth and satiny (8 to 10 minutes). Shape in a ball; place in lightly greased bowl, turning once to grease surface. Cover; let rise in warm place till double (about 1 1/4 hours). Punch down.

Cut dough in 2 portions. Shape each in smooth ball; cover and let rest 10 minutes. Shape in loaves; place in 2 greased 9x5x3-inch loaf pans. Cover and let rise till double (45 to 60 minutes). Bake in hot

Bake in Hot oven 400°

35 minutes till done

Makes 2 Loaves

**Perfect Whitebread**

Here's one of those things that people at home didn't do anymore, even when I was a kid. A woman who made her own bread or pizza or pasta was a cut above. She and my sister did all three, just to have done it, but it wasn't a daily thing. Sometimes, you just want to say you once did something in life, even if you sucked at it. If you are the kind of person who cannot try, more is the pity.

## ENGLISH MUFFIN PIZZA

Just to show you that tasty and nutritious can go together in the oddest combinations, have you ever had someone make Thomas English Muffin toast for you after a night of great sex?

Have you had it where the toast is not toasted, but covered with a slice of mozzarella cheese and topped with tomato sauce (garlic, onion & basil please), then baked in an oven at 175C (350F) until it all melts. Be sure to top it with oregano and – wham! – you have a tiny pizza.

Make a stack of them for football or more sex. I often put anchovies across the top before baking.

The muffins are already cooked right out of the package, so all you really want to do is heat them up and melt the cheese. It even looks like pizza.

Mom made an event out of them. I think she kept the idea in her back pocket until she felt the family getting in a rut or otherwise so into themselves they were drifting apart. This is a surefire way to make a family of your family. In my later years, I've taken to topping with a couple of pieces of pineapple you get in those dried fruit bags. But that's just me, and helps when the girl you are with is not into tasting fish on your breath.

If your kids don't love this, you will wonder how you could have raised such a monster. Nothing you can do about it, the world is full of such mean excuses for human beings.

Enjoy despite them.

**DESSERTS****Pineapple Upside Down Cake**

Great

pineapple upside-down cake. Real sticky and real good. Weighed a ton. Look up Betty Crocker if you want variation details. Hers was so good to this day I haven't tried it. Barbara M knew how. Then again, thanksgiving is coming up soon and Mom was always brave ...hmm.

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter 1 cup packed brown sugar 1 can (20 oz) pineapple slices, save the juice  
1 jar (6 oz) maraschino cherries, remove stems, drained 1 box yellow cake mix (Betty Crocker)

Use vegetable oil and eggs as called for in cake mix

Heat oven to 350°F (less for dark or nonstick pan). Melt butter in 13x9 inch pan in oven. Sprinkle brown sugar evenly over melted butter. Arrange pineapple slices on brown sugar. Place cherry in center of each pineapple slice, and arrange remaining cherries around slices; press gently into brown sugar.

Add enough water to reserved pineapple juice to measure 1 cup. Make cake batter as directed on box, substituting pineapple juice mixture for the water. Pour batter over pineapple and cherries.

Bake 40 to 46 minutes (44 to 53 minutes for dark or nonstick pan) or until toothpick in center comes out clean. Immediately run a knife around side of pan to loosen cake. Place heatproof serving plate upside down onto pan; turn plate and pan over. Leave pan over cake 5 minutes so brown sugar topping can drizzle over cake; then remove pan. Cool 30 minutes. Serve warm or cool. Store covered in refrigerator. Whipped cream is an option!

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### Lemon Meringue Pie

1 home-made deep dish pie crust



5 eggs, separated

1 3/4 cups sugar

Grated peel of 5 lemons (about 3 tablespoons)

Juice of 5 lemons (about 1 cup)

1/3 cup + 1 tablespoon cornstarch

1 1/2 cups boiling water

1 tablespoon butter

1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

Dash salt

Heat oven to 200 C (400°F) to cook the crust. Bake on oven rack 11 to 14 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool. In large glass bowl, mix egg yolks, 1 1/2 cups of sugar, lemon peel, lemon juice, and cornstarch with a whisk. Add ¼ cup of boiling water into the mixture using whisk to combine. Add an additional ¼ cup of boiling water. Add the remaining boiling water to the mixture. Heat on stove to simmer 4 minutes; stir with whisk. Heat an additional 2 minutes; stir. Continue heating at

2-minute intervals at a time until lemon mixture is thickened, about 8 minutes. Stir in butter. Reduce oven temperature to 160 C (325°F). In a medium glass bowl, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar with electric mixer on high speed until soft peaks form. Slowly beat in remaining ¼ cups sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, until stiff peaks form and mixture is glossy. Spoon egg white mixture onto pie filling. Spread over filling, carefully sealing meringue to edge of crust to prevent shrinking.

Bake 35 to 40 minutes, or until the meringue is golden brown and temperature in center of meringue reaches 20 C (70°F). Cool away from draft 2 hours. Refrigerate cooled pie until serving. Store covered in refrigerator.

Mom often made pie crust from scratch. Even from graham crackers which gave them even more flavor. Trade secret though - don't tell anybody else! On the lemon meringue pie overall, "Don't skimp. Plenty of everything."

## Chiffon Cake

Chiffon Cake

2 eggs separated  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 1/2 cups flour  
3 teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/3 cup salad oil  
1 cup milk  
2 teaspoons orange juice

Bake at 350°; Beat egg whites with  
1/2 cup sugar. Set aside. Mix remainder  
of sugar, flour, baking powder, salt;  
add oil; 1/2 cup milk + juice. Beat  
1 min. Add remainder milk + egg  
yolks. Beat 1 min. Fold in egg  
whites + spoon into 10" tube pan +  
Bake for 30 to 35 min or until brown.



Mom's directions above are straightforward, except for the green color of the interior sponge with which she would occasionally surprise us. Not likely made from Pandan leaves as they do in Asia thanks to a surprising General Mills influence there, and not artificially colored green all over as some do by using green tea leaves, it may be a trick of lime juice and enough sugar to keep it sweet. Delicious with hot coffee or cold milk. Can be decorated with various small fruits or preserves after cooking and cooling. Some people add icing to make it appealing, but Mom never had to. The mold she used is metal and lasted for decades. Like corn muffin pans, a necessity. Let it cool and separate on its own from the pan before removing.

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## Cinnamon Buns

Cinnamon Buns

Bake at 375° for 25 minutes  
makes 18 buns

1 - 2 envelopes yeast  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup very warm water  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  - 1 teaspoon sugar  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup milk  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup margarine  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  - 2 eggs  
 $2\frac{1}{2}$  -  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cups flour

Filling:  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup margarine

1 cup light brown sugar

1 cup raisins

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup walnuts

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Sprinkle yeast in warm water 1 teaspoon sugar,  
stand for 10 mins. Heat milk, sugar, salt + margarine

Pour into large bowl allow to cool. Beat in eggs  
not to warm. Stir in foaming yeast. Beat in

flour a little at a time. Knead about 5 mins.

Place dough in large bowl greased. Let  
rise 1 1/2 hours. Divide dough in half. Roll out  
add half filling on one then the other. Let rise (hr.  
if roll as jelly roll. covered in warm place)



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Covering the rising dough is keep to keeping to moisture even. Use a flat dark pan to bake. If you like chopped nuts, buy a bag of walnuts or pecans and chop to your desired size. Put them in the dough before rising. After baking when still hot, 'go to town' on the icing as this is one of those cases where more is good and too much is better. If it drips a little off the sides, that sounds just right. You can even sprinkle a few nuts or raisins on top and hold them in place with the icing! Yummy.

She thought cinnamon raisin buns were swell too. And her plain pound cake too - The simplest thing on the planet; just add the toppings, fillings, or side fruits after the fact at the table!

**Chocolate Filled Almond Cookies**Chocolate Filled Almond Cookies

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup margarine

1 cup sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla & almond extract

3 eggs (use 2 eggs)

$2\frac{2}{3}$  cups flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

Blanched almonds whole or half

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup semisweet chocolate <sup>pieces</sup> melted

Mix all ingredients & chill 1 hr.

Roll small amount at a time  $\frac{3}{8}$  thick.

Keep remaining dough cool until ready to use.

Cut  $2\frac{1}{4}$  size.

Beat remaining egg & brush on  
half <sup>the</sup> cookies (about 20) put almond in center

of each. Bake  $375^{\circ}$ ) 8 to 10 min.

Spread Chocolate on remaining cookies & put on  
top of almond cookies.



Mom made a virtue of things turning out different now and then. Or not so now and then. Each of the confections above came out of her over at one time or another, all based on the same core recipe! They were all good in their own way, although I found the white ‘Italian’ ones to be hard as rocks, not even softening dunked in coffee! The chocolate inside or the almonds throughout were my favorites by far. But even for these, you need strong teeth. That’s just how life is sometimes.

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### Cream Cheese Foldovers

#### Cream Cheese Foldovers

1 cup butter softened

8 ounce cream cheese softened

2 cups flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

Confectioners sugar

Red jam or other;

Cream butter & cheese together until  
fluffy; Blend in flour & salt.

Chill several hrs.  $\frac{1}{2}$

Roll  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick with confectioners sugar  
cut 2" thick (squares) & spread  
jelly. Fold  $\frac{1}{2}$ " opposite corner to

other corner

Bake ( $350^{\circ}$ ) 15 min. Do not brown.



The variations on a delightful little snack like these are hard to overstate. You can use cream cheese with so many fruit fillings, jellies, jams, and little stuff like raisins that your imagination is really the only limit. Mom always emphasized how when it was our turn as adults to do such things, we could add our own spin to whatever we made or ate. Or did in life. I wonder why so few people can hear that message.

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**Classic Almond Creme + Almond Macaroons**Classic Almond Creme

1 envelope Knox Unflavored Gelatine

1/4 cup water

1 1/2 cups whipped cream

1/2 cup sugar

2 eggs

1/2 teaspoon almond extract

In small saucepan, sprinkle gelatine over water. Let stand 1 min. Stir over low heat until completely dissolved.

In blender or food processor, process cream, sugar, eggs & almond extract 2 mins. While processing, gradually add gelatine mixture & process until blended. Pour into dessert dishes, chill.

Dress with fruit. 6 servings

Almond Macaroons

Mix 1 roll paste 7 oz. sugar, 2 egg whites & a dash of salt smooth. Place small amount portions on foil. Bake at 300° for 20-25 mins.



Personally not a macaroon lover, Mom continued to put foods in front of us that we would not necessarily go for, at least not all of us. This taught us a lot of things, including trying stuff you once thought you didn't like, but your tastes changed over time. Mine never did for those days, but I never complained when she made them instead of what I asked for (at least I don't remember giving her a hard time about it).

## Sour Cream Cake

Sour Cream Cake

Bake 350° for 45 mins. to 1 hr.

Cream 2 lbs. of margarine

1 cup sugar

3 eggs, 1 teaspoon vanilla,

1 cup sour cream; mix together

3 cups flour, 3 tps. baking soda, 3 tps.  
baking powder.

Topping. 1/2 cup crushed nuts

1/2 cup sugar (brown)

1 top cinnamon

1 to 2 tops. margarine  
Mix everything as given, spoon batter  
into an ungreased tube pan, put in  
half topping, put in rest of batter +  
remaining topping on top + bake.

You can add: raisins, bananas or chocolate  
chips. (very good)

13x9x2

or

10x4 inch

Angel cake pan - 18 cups



As you can see from the photos above, mom could vary the recipe to make straight vanilla cake or even a coffee cake layered in the middle with heavy crumbs on top. Your imagination is your only limit. Hers was awesome. She often served it with fresh or canned fruit on the side; cooking with jelly or jam or preserves inside was messy and delightful.

### Orange Cookies

#### Orange Cookies

2 1/2 cups flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon salt

3 1/4 cups margarine

1 1/4 cups sugar

2 eggs

1 tablespoon grating orange peel  
+ a little juice.

1- Measure flour, baking powder, salt

2- Beat margarine with 1 cup <sup>sugar</sup> +

fluff up in a large bowl at high speed  
in electric mixer, beat in eggs + orange  
peel juice.

3- Sift in flour mixture a little at  
time. Chill until firm.

Roll out dough into round or squares  
on lightly floured board, sprinkle with  
dredged sugar or colored sprinkles.

Bake on cookie sheet 400° for 10 minutes.

Glaze - Makes 1/4 cup - Combine

1/2 cup 10x sugar + 1 teaspoon grated lemon + 1/2 teaspoon  
lemon juice in a small bowl.



Sometimes things in life happen that you have to digest. Which you hear or see but do not fully absorb. She understood time. She understood the need to digest, especially something that rocks your reality. She was much better at it than most humans, including her husband and three children. But she showed us how, more often than not by simple analogy; by orange sugar cookies dunked in cold milk.

**Graham Cheesecake**



Graham crackers }  
 melted butter } mix  
 put in pan  
 mix 2 packs cream cheese  
 3 eggs }  
 sugar } mix in mixer  
 Vanilla } till smooth (press)  
 Pour in graham cracker mix down  
 375° for 45<sup>min</sup> or 48<sup>min</sup> (up to sides)  
 until set.  
 Take a Roasting pan & fill with  
 boiled water.  
 Wrap aluminum paper around cake  
 pan for moisture & place cake  
 in roasting pan & bake for  
 45<sup>min</sup> it will be soft.  
 Warm up blueberries & pour  
 over cheesecake

I love the fact that mom made the graham crust go all the way up the sides of whatever pan she used, not just a layer across the bottom. The top was usually left bare so that you could add whatever fruit or nuts or whatever you liked to the top. Maybe syrup. Maybe ice cream. Frankly, it was so delicious just as it came out that I seldom saw any garnishment, and that was replicated and confirmed by the numerous other mouths who were graced to get slices. Janet K got this one just right as well. Yum. Some things don't need garnishment. Some people – Like Janet - don't need them either. Beware those who do.

**Old Fashioned Molasses Cookies**

For Gingerbread men

Old Fashioned Molasses Cookies

4 1/2 cups flour

2 teaspoons baking soda

1 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon salt

1/3 cup water

1/2 cup vegetable shortening

3/4 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) margarine

1 1/2 cups Molasses

1- Soft flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon,  
+ salt.2- Combine water, shortening + margarine in  
medium size sauce pan. Heat just until  
fats are melted, pour into a large bowl,  
stir in molasses.3- Add flour mixture, a third at a time,  
blending well to make a stiff dough. Cover  
bowl, chill several hours or until firm.Roll out dough 1/4 at a time 1/8 in. thick + cut  
with shapes. - 1 inch apart on greased cookie sheet  
Bake 350° 7 to 8 mins.



As far as old-fashioned cooking goes, there are few things that both invoke a better past and also live up to the hype. Mom's were either hard or soft. Hard was great to dunk or as exercise for the teeth. The soft ones were so full of flavor that they should have been illegal.

**Spirited Marble Cake**

Spirited Marble Cake

Bake 350° for 1 hour.

Makes 1 ten-inch cake.

3 cups sifted cake flour

3½ teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter or margarine

2 cups sugar

4 eggs - separated

2 teaspoons Vanilla

1 cup milk

¾ cup canned chocolate syrup

¼ cup creme de cacao

Chocolate Frosting (Recipe follows)

1- Sift Flour, baking powder + salt.

2- Beat butter until soft in large bowl of electric mixer. Beat in sugar until light & fluffy.

Beat in egg yolks, one at a time, stir in vanilla.

3- Stir in flour mixture alternately with milk just until blended. Pour half the batter into another bowl, stir in chocolate + creme de cacao. Spoon both batters into prepared pans,

alternating layers of white & dark dough.  
Draw knife through batter several times  
to marbleize.

Bake at (350) 1 hour, or until finger  
springs back when lightly ~~touched~~  
Cool 10 minutes on wire rack.

Chocolate Frosting

3/4 cups (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter  
2 eggs  
2 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened  
chocolate  
1 tablespoon crème de cacao  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
1/4 teaspoon salt

3 cups 10x Confectioners' sugar  
Melt Chocolate with crème de cacao in small  
saucepans over very low heat. stir until  
blended; remove from heat. Beat butter  
in a small bowl until soft; beat in eggs  
one at a time; continue to beat until mixture  
is creamy & smooth. Blend in chocolate

mixture, vanilla + salt, gradually add sugar, beating smooth + fluffy.



Sometimes things that look so simple take the most work, or the most words to explain to someone. That's life.

## German Anise Cookies

⑧

Anise Cookies

1

Bake at 325° for 10 mins.

2 eggs

1 cup sugar

1/4 cup sifted flour

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

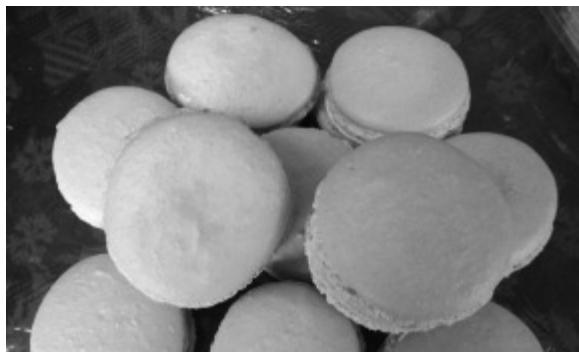
1 teaspoon anise flavor

1- Beat eggs until light & fluffy about 10 mins. Add sugar a tablespoon at a time; 10 mins.; Mix flour, baking powder + salt add flour mixture a little at a time.

Drop dough by teaspoon onto a lightly greased pan 1 in. apart & let dry uncovered at room temperature over night.

Bake in oven 12 mins. until bottom is brown. Remove from cookie sheet. let cool.

⑧



I never knew this was part of my mother's German heritage. A traditional cookie, I just thought it was neat how the top rose and separated into a dome above the rest of the cookie below. Sweet and crunchy when made my Mom's way. No one else I know makes them. Ever. Even pastry shops and bakeries. This was special, and so was she.

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**Venetians - Italian Xmas**

2- Continue Venetians

3

5 Remove  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups batter; spread evenly into prepared pan. Remove another  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups batter + add the green food coloring, spread evenly in second pan; Add red food coloring to remaining  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups batter + spread into the last prepared pan.

6 Bake in a moderate oven ( $350^\circ$ ) 15 minutes or just until edges are golden brown.

(Note) layers will be thin, only  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch thick. 7-Remove layers from pans onto large wire rack. Cool thoroughly & Place green layer on jelly roll pan. Heat apricot preserves stain. Spread  $\frac{1}{2}$  of warm preserves over green layer; slide yellow layer on top; spread the remaining preserves; slide pink layer right-side up onto yellow layer. ☺

1-

Venetians

4 eggs, separated

1 can (8 ounce) almond paste

1/3 cups (3 sticks) butter or margarine  
softened.

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon almond extract

2 cups flour

1/4 teaspoon salt

10 drops green food coloring,

8 drops red food coloring

1 jar (12 ounce) apricot preserves

2 squares semisweet chocolate

1 Grease 3 (7 3/4 x 2 inch) pans; line  
with wax paper. grease again.

2- Beat egg whites until stiff peaks  
form in small bowls.

3- Break up almond paste in large  
bowl; add butter, sugar, egg yolks  
& almond extract. Beat with electric  
mixer at high speed until fluffy.

4. Add flour & salt. Fold beaten egg  
whites into almond mixture  
with a wire whip. over -

3- Venetians

4

9- Cover with plastic wrap; weight down with a large wooden cutting board or heavy plate. Place in refrigerator overnight.

10- Melt chocolate over hot water in a small tin cup. Spread to edges of cake; let dry 30 minutes. Trim edges off cake. Cut into 1-inch squares.



Some things in life take more steps than others, but if you find them worthwhile, you will go the distance. Other things are simple in principle, but take a lot of words to explain human to human. These traditional triple-deck concoctions are delightful to look and even better to eat. Too good to describe unless you've had hers: moist and sweet.

### Honey Bubble Cakes

#### Honey Bubbles

2 cups flour

2 1/2 teaspoons Baking powder

1 tablespoon Vinegar

3 eggs

3 Tablespoons Whiskey

1/2 t. Vanilla

Mix together & brown  
in deep pot of veg. oil until  
lightly brown. Remove with  
large stainless spoon with holes  
onto brown paper.



You would think that with my respect for a desire for mom's simple cooking something made bite-sized and covered with honey and sprinkles would have been near if not at the top of my list of treats. I couldn't stand them. Others seemed to go for them, but whether it was their rock-hard consistency, their inability to soften when dunked, or whatever, I ate a few when she was looking out of love – for her, not the honey bubbles. Everything has a cost. And she made them every year.

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Orange Cookies

2 1/2 cups flour  
 2 teaspoons baking powder  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 $3\frac{1}{4}$  cups margarine  
 1 1/2 cups sugar  
 2 eggs  
 1 tablespoon grating orange peel  
 + a little juice.

1. Measure flour, baking powder, salt.
2. Beat margarine with 1 cup ~~sugar~~<sup>sugar</sup> +  
 fluffy in a large bowl at high speed  
 in electric mixer; beat in eggs + orange  
 peel juice.
3. Sift in flour mixture a little at  
 time. Chill until firm.  
 Roll out dough into round or squares  
 on lightly floured board, sprinkle with  
 a layer of sugar or colored sprinkles.  
 Bake on cookie sheet - 400° for 8 minutes.

Glaze - Makes  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup. In combine  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  cup 10+ sugar + 1 teaspoon grated lemon + 1 tablespoon  
 lemon juice in a small bowl.

**Orange Cookies**



They never tasted so much like acidy oranges that as a child I associated them with oranges – strangely enough – but here they were. Tasty and great to eat dry or dunked in cold milk. Not so crumb-creating if you make them right. But even the crumbs are good (I was a crumb thief).

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**Apricot & Apple Turnovers**

Apple Turnovers →

Using this recipe with apples; cut apples in thin slices + mix with brown sugar + cinnamon. with 2 tablespoons of melted butter + spread on dough + fold over as triangles.

Somehow I remember a childhood where I never asked for them but always loved their flavor, taste, consistency, sweetness, crunchiness, messiness, and well, pretty much everything about them. Maybe my father didn't go for them as much or the time to make them was too much with her other responsibilities to us, but she was loved. Did I say she? I meant to say they, the turnovers.

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**Italian Anise Toast**

Here's one of those things that people who are not of Sicilian or Mediterranean descent fail to consider. The flavor of anise is so pungent and delightful as to be unforgettable after a single tasting. I suppose if I were from India or Pakistan I would feel the same way about curry, but being born of a Sicilian father and an Irish/German mother (Celtic), I find it's anise and not curry which warms my heart.

I regret not having her recipe in her own hand, but if you will bear with my childhood memory I shall do my best.

We ate more of the ones from Stella D'Oro as kids, but loved her for trying!

Also called Anisette or Biscotti toast, there are several ways to incorporate the licorice flavor. You can use Sambuca or Anisette liqueur; the anise seed or extract; or anise oil. If using anise seeds, one way to inten-

sify the flavor is by soaking them in 1-2 teaspoons of rum for 10 minutes. I usually use only the Anisette liqueur.

I recall 1 cup flour, 2/3 cup of sugar, 2 eggs, ½ tsp baking powder, and a dash of vegetable oil. Note no butter in this recipe, use oil instead. Beat the eggs for 5 min until thick, then gradually stir in everything.

You can place the really soft batter directly on your parchment-lined baking sheet. Using a loaf pan will give a little height, which ensures less breakage. Bake for 20 minutes at 175 degrees C (350F). Use toothpick to test. A wet toothpick is not done!

Cool off the loaf on a wire rack, then slice after allowing to cool a little, before the second bake. After cutting, bake 10-12 minutes more until browned. Without the second bake, you get a lovely American version, soft inside. I like mine hard as rocks for dunking & crunching.

Keep an eye on them as they cook. Try them with a tall glass of cold milk or hot espresso. Yum.

**Cream Puffs**

③Cream Puffs

21

1 cup water $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (1 stick) butter or margarine1 cup flour $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt4 eggs1. Heat water + margarineTo boiling in a medium -  
size heavy saucepan. Add  
flour + salt all at once.Stir vigorously with a  
wooden spoon until batter  
forms a thick smooth  
ball that follows spoon  
around pan; remove from  
heat immediately.2. Beat in eggs one at a  
time, beating well after  
each addition, until  
batter is shiny and smooth.



What can you say about a confection specifically designed to please? So complex yet simple in appearance and versatility of stuffing that even the elite and famous with live-in chefs of their own demand their presence at affairs and events.

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### The Right Beverage (and amount)

She preferred tea to coffee, green when possible, but drank both. It was alcoholic beverages which she never completed a full glass. Liked keeping her senses about her.

Not one to forbid others their earthly pleasures, which in itself is a good lesson for us all. On holidays or occasions, she might sip sherry. Never a cocktail. Not a beer. A glass of wine with a large Sunday dinner, especially pasta dishes. Standard red wine with red meats and white with fish, but even white with pasta, as the reds seemed too strong for her. As children, we were given wine with ginger ale on such days, diluted appropriately for our age (5 and up). She did the same thing herself! If wine was served at a meal, there was also a glass of water nearby.

Ginger ale was the preferred soda, as it had less sugar and chemicals than cola and others. Sarsaparilla and root beer were treats that we preferred to cola until we entered the world and found all our classmates and neighbors on the cola wagon. Then kids did what kids always do and fell in line.

Beer had a special place for the men of the family, but my sister went for cocktails and beer alike, often – as the oldest – having one with our father before the big Sunday meal. Beer was with sandwiches or heroes when working heavily outside in the summer with my father & brother, for barbeques, for hot dogs and burgers, even occasionally with pasta meals. Steak was fine with a beer. No fancy imports or local microbrews back then, but straight American Budweiser, Schlitz, or Miller.

For wine selections, Gallo was inexpensive and at the time made generic red burgundy and a white which I never knew the grape name - perhaps Chablis or Chianti. The red was for meat dishes, the white for fish, and personal choice ruled everything else. Personal freedom which did not unduly harm you or others extended to every aspect of her life. It

caused her a lot of grief with her idiot granddaughter, but people like her are going to go bad no matter what.

On going out dating, “We used to go on boats for dancing and listening (to music). They were everywhere. We used to play games like shuffleboard (when we were young). We were active without thinking about it. At the time of this writing, such activities were considered only good for old folks on cruise ships. More is the loss.

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## EPILOGUE

While in a Putnam hospital for complications following implantation of a defibrillator (pacemaker & surge shocker), the widowed Mary intended to gather her three children unto her at the end for counsel on her final disposition and to speak of their own lives. Her earthly remains had long since been discussed and prepared for, in a grave at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Valhalla, NY where she would lay beside her lifelong husband and his own father in a modest family plot.

Her belongings were few enough, but precious to her. Old family photos & Xmas ornaments. A lazy Susan with a mirrored surface was intended for her eldest, daughter Annette, though A. confided to me she didn't want the decaying old-fashioned item. A Corning coffee maker pot, old fashioned, and a special 'silvered' edition from when she first married, was for her youngest, Charley. She reminded Charley of an old, ragged dictionary – of not inconsiderable size – which contained old foreign bills between several of its pages. He had forgotten and reminisced with her briefly on being a child on the living room floor in Yonkers, drawing pictures of sailing vessels out of that dictionary's illustrations. They were illustrated nicely in those days. No photos or digitization, but hand-crafted artwork. Such a loss in this digital age.



Various coins and paintings could be easily divided among the three, with all arbitration decided by her eldest son, Anthony. Called Tony by friends and girls alike in school, he at first disliked the name and couldn't understand why they called him that. The child grew into a man everyone knew and loved as gentle Tony. At least until he turned dark in a way no one saw coming.

Her very modest finances were to be divided equally among the three, with personal items unspecified left to them. She lovingly put aside a few special coins collected over the years, some in soft cases, some in an old mayonnaise jar. A straight-talking, straight-thinking Mary would have it no other way, and didn't feel the need to make a big deal of it, but trusted them to treasure them as memories, even passing them on to her grandchildren.

Her casual approach to the challenges of life hid a passionate belief in truth and justice. In seeing things as they were instead of how you wanted them. She often confided a surprising kinship to actress Hedy Lamar, who met at the Stanhope Hotel in NYC where her husband worked as a barman. In her day, Lamar was considered one of the most remarkable beauties in the world. Blushing when her husband compared their striking looks to each other, the humble housewife was warmed as much by their similarity in living life. Lamar was educated and held critical electronic patents in code breaking which evolved into establishing the internet itself. Her scientist younger son never met her but came to know someone she inspired, Pamela Tiffin, in college. Mary finished high school early at 16 and never spoke with the sophisticated diction of Hedy or Pamela though they often agreed completely on how they saw the world:

“The most beautiful make-up for a woman is passion. But cosmetics are easier to buy.” Hedy & Pamela were never seen unmade, Mary was never seen with. Yet the words of one could be spoken by all.

"The world is not getting any easier. With all these new inventions I believe that people are hurried more and pushed more.... The hurried way is not the right way; you need time for everything – to work, to play, to rest."

"Any girl can look glamorous. All you have to do is stand still and look stupid."

"Hope and curiosity about the future seemed better than guarantees. The unknown was always so attractive to me...and still is after a lifetime of living."

"All creative people want to do the unexpected."

"I can excuse everything but boredom. Boring people don't have to stay that way. Life can be so interesting."

"American men, as a group, seem to be interested in only 2 things: money and breasts. It seems a terribly narrow outlook."

"Compromise and tolerance are magic words." Hedy: 'It took me 40 years to become philosophical' Mary: 'It took 40 years to abandon over-thinking situations.' Pamela: 'Born over-thinking!'

"I don't fear death because I don't fear anything I don't understand." Hedy: 'When I start to think about it I order a massage and it goes away.' Mary: 'When I start to think about it, I sew or cook and it goes away.' Pamela would just laugh.

You would be hard-pressed to find Hollywood beauties today or a housewife who is close to being their equal. Nuff said.

**END-MATTER: Books By This Author**sci-fi novels

Dominant Life Form

Alive Be Deemed

Robots Of Earth

Allegiance and Betrayal

short stories

Science Fiction Anthology (7 stories)

Better Off Not Knowing (a play)

non-fiction

A Dyslexic Learns To Read By Power Lifting

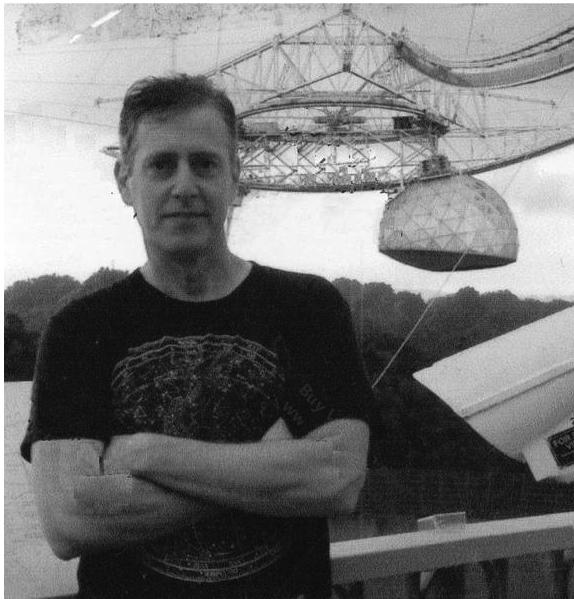
Quantum Magic 101

Are You New To Earth?

Be sure to leave a review at your favorite retailer (Barnes & Noble,  
Amazon, etc)

or comment on his social media.





## About the Author

Author Charlie J. Marino was born in the Bronx, New York and holds a BS and MS in nuclear engineering from Columbia University. His various occupations included bond and commodities trading, founding several small computer companies, and now writes sci-fi novels and short stories. He has more robots than friends, but they're good ones. The author makes his home in the mountains of America, where he helps the nice folks at SETI & carves his own wooden chess sets.



